

FH Live

The word that I want to focus on is **RESILIENCY**. Although we haven't been through anything like this before and it is impacting us globally, we all have to deal with one form or another of tragedy and crisis in our lives. Resiliency is what we need **to get through tough times**, and we need to teach our children coping skills for this current challenge- as well as any other challenges they will face in the future.

1. Parents set the climate and the example for their children.

Kids will look to you for guidance and how to respond to situations, especially scary and difficult ones. They will follow your lead-whether it's positive or negative. If you are overly anxious, they will be also. If you keep a positive attitude and exude confidence they will too.

2. Meet the needs for security, predictability and a healthy amount of control. When critical needs are met we stay in thinking mode, not in emotional fight or flight.

3. Maintain predictable and consistent schedules and routines including meals, bedtimes, homework and chores. Doing chores will help meet your child's need to contribute to the family, instill a sense of purpose and belonging as well as provide an outlet for activity with visible results.

4. Your verbal responses to your children also need to be calm, consistent and predictable as possible. We are all stressed and this means we need to be more patient, provide more grace and rise above the now to set the example for always.

Teaching resiliency:

1. We want to first be **aware of our own feelings** and reactions to this situation. Are you demonstrating a calm and confident example? Are you making wise and logical decisions?
2. Next, consider the **child's age, maturity and temperament** for how much information we will share with them about the situation.
3. We need to **first find out what they know**. Seek understanding before being understood. **Ask questions and listen**.
4. **Provide honest and factual information** that is age appropriate.
5. **Acknowledge fears with empathy**. Allow them to feel whatever they are feeling and let them talk about it. "It's okay to feel _____". Address the emotions without judgment and then figure out what can be done.
 - Life can be hard
 - Re-assure this won't last forever
 - Others can help- just ask
 - There is always hope.
6. **Empower your children** first by including them in the everyday decision process whenever appropriate. Provide a CAN DO attitude that role models confidence, competence, flexibility, creativity, perseverance and hope.
7. **Suggest ideas and getting their input for activities that are fun and helpful**. Create a **calendar of family events** that you will all contribute to and look forward to doing when possible. Having a month at a glance visual of how far we've come so far and the plans of action ahead will help.
8. **Provide 2 choices whenever possible** to help share control- food, activities, games, exercises, chores, crafts, movies, etc.

Fun activities for kids:

- Build a fort inside the house using blankets, chairs, tables, and boxes.
- Pitch a tent in the living room.
- Build a birdhouse and paint it.
- Put on a talent show (magic, dance, singing, skits, etc.)
- Build castles and other creative structures out of empty cereal, tissue boxes, empty paper towel tubes, egg cartons, milk cartons and delivery boxes.
- Learn to sew, knit, crochet, make fleece tie blankets.
- Learn to cook
- Plant a garden
- Family walks and bike rides
- Learn a new dance- family dance party
- Go on a scavenger hunt outside looking for specific items
- Plan dinners around a theme- fondue, Mexican, Chinese, Italian- decorate place cards, place mats, centerpieces, etc.
- Arts and crafts projects to keep or donate- paint, watercolor, clay, collages, pressed flowers, etc.

Helpful activities for kids:

- Write letters/draw pictures for military personnel.
- Write letters/draw pictures for elderly or hospital patients.
- Write thank you letters to front line personnel.
- Make a list of your favorite things about each family member and exchange them at dinnertime.
- Learn a new vocabulary word of the day- keep a list going and review periodically.
- Keep a journal of how your family is navigating this challenging time as an outlet to express emotions, concerns and solutions.
- Clean out your room out- sort through toys and clothes- make 3 piles: what to keep, donate or pass down to siblings. Create a needs list for shopping later.

Create a positive acronym for COVID-19

C= courageous, capable, compassionate, confident, convictions

O= overcomers, okay, opportunity, optimistic

V= vigilant, vibrant, values,

I= intelligent, inventive, ingenuity

D= determined, diligent,

1= God and one day at a time

9= people I can count on, things I can do to help

Have family members add words as you think of new ones!